

OVERVIEW

The Mississippi READII project is focusing on raising immunization rates among African American elderly in 19 rural Delta counties by developing educational activities and increasing access to immunization services.

POPULATION DATA

19-County Total Population: 707,000
African American Population 65 and Older: 33,000

COVERAGE DATA

Influenza Immunization Rate for Population 65 and Older (Mississippi-wide)*
African American: 43% Caucasian: 69%

Pneumococcal Immunization Rate for Population 65 and Older (Mississippi-wide)*
African American: 27% Caucasian: 61%

**Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data, 1999 and 2001 combined average*

KEY PARTNERS

The Mississippi Department of Health is taking a leadership role in this effort. Partners include local health departments, community organizations, and providers in the following 19 Mississippi counties: Bolivar, Coahoma, Grenada, Hinds, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, LeFlore, Tunica, Panola, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Yalobusha, Yazoo, Warren, Washington.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The project aims to expand accessibility of immunizations and to promote the effectiveness of immunizations to the elderly population through:

- Provider education and assessment of immunization rates.
- Regional planning meetings involving all stakeholders in targeted intervention areas.
- Communication needs assessment and provider surveys to determine perceptions of the target populations and identification of immunization barriers.
- Production of influenza and pneumococcal educational materials and public service announcements.
- Increased hiring of nurses to administer vaccinations.
- Promotional events, including many during National Adult Immunization Awareness Week.